

## Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 MEXICO 10399 01 OF 02 230212Z  
ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SS-14 SSO-00 NSC-05 NSCE-00 A-01  
/031 W

-----050043 230249Z /75

P 230043Z JUN 77

FM AMEMBASSY MEXICO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 3051

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 MEXICO 10399

LIMDIS

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: OVIP, SCUL

SUBJECT: DISCUSSION OF BORDER MEETING BETWEEN MRS. CARTER  
AND SRA. DE LOPEZ PORTILLO

REF: STATE 143437 AND PREVIOUS

1. SUMMARY: IN MY JUNE 21 MEETING, SRA. DE LOPEZ PORTILLO  
EXTENDED FORMAL INVITATION TO MRS. ROSALYNN CARTER TO MEET  
AT BORDER LOCATION. OF TIME PERIODS MENTIONED IN REFTEL,  
MRS. LOPEZ PORTILLO SEEMED MOST ATTRACTED TO LATE AUGUST.  
ON LOCALE, DISCUSSION FOCUSED ON TIJUANA-SAN DIEGO OR  
CIUDAD JUAREZ-EL PASO. (FOREIGN SECRETARY ROEL URGES  
LATER DATE, SPECIFICALLY NOVEMBER.) PLANS FOR CONTENT OF  
VISIT ARE NEBULOUS. END SUMMARY.

2. MRS. LOPEZ PORTILLO HAD ASSEMBLED FOREIGN SECRETARY  
ROEL; TOURISM SECRETARY ROSSELL; MARCO VINICIO MARTINEZ  
GUERRERO, WHO HEADS DESARROLLO INTEGRAL DE LA FAMILIA  
(DIF) AND IS IN CHARGE OF HER SOCIAL PROGRAM; AND HALF  
DOZEN OTHERS. SHE AND ROEL CARRIED THE CONVERSATION. POL  
COUNSELOR STARRS AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS COUNSELOR BALDYGA  
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PAGE 02 MEXICO 10399 01 OF 02 230212Z

ACCOMPANIED ME.

3. SHE ASKED ME TO CONVEY FORMAL INVITATION TO MRS.  
CARTER TO JOIN HER IN VISIT TO THE BORDER AREA, CONFIRMING  
THEIR DISCUSSION DURING FEBRUARY STATE VISIT TO WASHING-  
TON. WHEN I REFERRED TO DATES IN REFTEL, SHE SAID PRES-  
IDENT AND SHE WOULD BE OUT OF COUNTRY DURING PART OF

SEPTEMBER AND SAID DATE TOWARD END OF AUGUST WOULD BE PERFECT.

4. ON VISIT SITE, MRS. LOPEZ PORTILLO AT ONE POINT SAID PRESIDENT HAD A SPECIAL AFFECTION FOR TIJUANA AREA (WITHOUT BEING MORE SPECIFIC), AND ROSSELL SEEMED TO ENDORSE IT WITH COMMENT THAT IT IS BORDER LOCATION WHERE THERE IS MOST MEXICAN-US INTERCHANGE OF PERSONS. ON OTHER HAND, MRS. LOPEZ PORTILLO ALSO SUGGESTED CIUDAD JUAREZ-EL PASO (WHICH SHE REFERRED TO AS "CHAMIZAL").

5. I EXPRESSED APPRECIATION, ON BEHALF MRS. CARTER, FOR MRS. LOPEZ PORTILLO'S GRACIOUS INVITATION AND PROMISED TO CONVEY INVITATION AND SUGGESTIONS RE TIME AND PLACE TO DEPARTMENT FOR CONSIDERATION BY MRS. CARTER. MRS. LOPEZ PORTILLO SAID SHE WOULD BE AWAITING A REPLY.

6. WHEN I ASKED FOR VIEWS ON CONTENT AND THEME OF THE VISIT, THE MOST CONCRETE STATEMENT TO EMERGE WAS THAT IT WOULD CONSTITUTE FOLLOW UP OF MRS. LOPEZ PORTILLO'S SUGGESTION TO MRS. CARTER DURING FEBRUARY VISIT THAT SOMETHING SHOULD BE DONE TO IMPROVE THE CLIMATE AND TONE OF THE MEXICAN-US BORDER CITIES. MRS. LOPEZ PORTILLO'S IDEA IS TO BEGIN VIA THIS VISIT THE COMPREHENSIVE TASK OF MAKING THE BORDER CITIES CENTERS FOR CULTURAL CONTACTS BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES; NOT JUST MUSIC AND CONCERTS, MRS. LOPEZ PORTILLO SAID, BUT ALL FORMS OF CULTURE. AT  
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PAGE 03 MEXICO 10399 01 OF 02 230212Z

ONE TIME SHE MENTIONED "BROTHERHOOD" (BY WHICH SHE MAY HAVE MEANT TWIN CITIES ACTIVITY) AND ALSO THE CREATION OF CULTURAL CENTERS, WHERE PEOPLE ON BOTH SIDES OF THE BORDER CAN MEET AND COME TO KNOW EACH OTHER. DURING THIS MEETING AND AFTER IN SIDE CONVERSATION, ROEL EMPHASIZED THAT THE INITIATIVE THAT WOULD BE BEGUN WITH FIRST LADIES' MEETING WOULD BE EXTENDED ALL ALONG THE FRONTIER; HE REFERRED TO "AN INTEGRATED PROGRAM FOR RESCUE OF THE BORDER" INVOLVING COOPERATION ON BOTH SIDES OF THE FRONTIER. ROEL RESPONDED TO MY POINT THAT, WHATEVER LOCALE IS CHOSEN FOR THE MEETING, OTHERS WILL FEEL LEFT OUT, BY EMPHASIZING THAT THE SCOPE OF THE PROGRAM FOR CULTURAL IMPROVEMENT OF THE BORDER WOULD BE FROM TIJUANA TO BROWNSVILLE, AND THAT THE MEETING WOULD BE ONLY THE BEGINNING.

7. WHILE TRYING NOT TO BE THE SPECTER AT THE LOVE FEAST, I CAUTIONED, FIRST, THAT ANY MAJOR US ACTION ON A BORDER PROGRAM WOULD REQUIRE THE APPROVAL OF CONGRESS AND THE APPROPRIATION OF FUNDS, AND, SECOND, THAT THE AREA OF BORDER ACTIONS INVOLVES COMPLICATED AND SENSITIVE RELATIONS WITH THE STATES, COUNTIES AND CITIES; THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT IS ONLY ONE FACTOR IN THE EQUATION. I ALSO EMPHASIZ-

ED THAT THE MEETING OF THE FIRST LADIES BORE A DE FACTO  
RELATIONSHIP WITH THE WORKING GROUPS AGREED ON DURING THE  
MAY 26 WASHINGTON MEETING BETWEEN SECRETARY ROEL AND  
SECRETARY VANCE, POINTING OUT THAT ONE OF THE SUB-GROUPS  
OF THE SOCIAL QUESTIONS WORKING GROUP WOULD BE CONSIDERING  
BORDER PROBLEMS. ROEL PICKED THIS UP IMMEDIATELY AND CON-  
CURRED, POINTING OUT FURTHER THAT THE MEETING BETWEEN  
MRS. CARTER AND MRS. LOPEZ PORTILLO SHOULD BE PUT IN THE  
CONTEXT OF ITS RELATIONSHIP TO THE BILATERAL MECHANISM  
MEETINGS AND ADDING THAT IT SHOULD BE IDENTIFIED AS A

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PAGE 01 MEXICO 10399 02 OF 02 230219Z

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 3052

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 02 OF 02 MEXICO 10399

FOLLOW UP TO THE AGREEMENT TO COOPERATE THAT WAS MENTIONED  
IN THE JOINT COMMUNIQUE ISSUED AT THE END OF PRESIDENT  
LOPEZ PORTILLO'S FEBRUARY STATE VISIT.

8. FOLLOWING THE MEETING, FOREIGN SECRETARY ROEL, WHO  
MRS. LOPEZ PORTILLO IDENTIFIED AS HAVING COORDINATING ROLE  
IN ARRANGING FOR THE MEETING, TOLD ME THAT HE THOUGHT IT  
WOULD BE VAIN TO TRY TO PUT TOGETHER AND CARRY OUT A  
PROGRAM OF THE KIND THAT MRS. LOPEZ PORTILLO SEEMED TO  
ENVISION IN TWO MONTHS, AND HE MADE CLEAR HE WOULD BE  
HAPPY TO SEE THE US SIDE COUNTERPROPOSE NOVEMBER AS THE  
TIME FOR THE MEETING. (HE MUST BE PROTECTED ABSOLUTELY  
AS SOURCE FOR THIS SUGGESTION.) AS ROEL SEES IT, A LOT  
OF JUST PLAIN PHYSICAL LABOR IS GOING TO HAVE TO BE DONE  
BEFORE THE MEETING TAKES PLACE: HE MENTIONED ROAD-  
BUILDING, HOUSE-PAINTING AND OTHER POTEMKIN-VILLAGE  
ACTIVITY, AS WELL AS CLEANING UP NARCOTICS TRAFFICKERS.  
(IN EXPLAINING TO ME HIS PREFERENCE FOR NOVEMBER, ROEL  
NOTED THAT THE PRESIDENT AND HIS WIFE AS WELL AS HE AND  
PROBABLY OTHER CABINET OFFICERS WOULD BE TRAVELING TO

SPAIN FOR A STATE VISIT DURING OCTOBER, DATES NOT SPECIFIED. A FURTHER CONSIDERATION ON TIMING IS THAT MID-SEPTEMBER IS FULLY OCCUPIED BY THE CEREMONIES IN CONNECTION WITH MEXICAN INDEPENDENCE.)

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PAGE 02 MEXICO 10399 02 OF 02 230219Z

9. COMMENT. I BELIEVE THAT THE PROPOSAL FOR A MEETING BETWEEN MRS. CARTER AND MRS. LOPEZ PORTILLO IS A POSITIVE DEVELOPMENT, AND ONE THAT COULD GO A LONG WAY TOWARD MAINTAINING MOMENTUM TOWARD STRENGTHENING MEXICAN-US RELATIONS. THE MEXICAN GOVERNMENT, PARTICULARLY SECRETARY ROEL, IS IMPRESSED BY THE FAVORABLE REACTION IN LATIN AMERICA TO MRS. CARTER'S RECENTLY COMPLETED VISIT AS THE PRESIDENT'S PERSONAL REPRESENTATIVE TO A NUMBER OF HEMISPHERIC COUNTRIES.

10. IT IS GOING TO BE DIFFICULT FOR US ALL TO ENSURE THAT THE MRS. CARTER-MRS. LOPEZ PORTILLO VISIT IS PROPERLY ORGANIZED AND GIVEN THE SPECIFICITY THAT IT SHOULD HAVE. AS THE ABOVE ACCOUNT OF OUR FIRST REAL CONTACT ON THE PROPOSED VISIT SHOWS, MRS. LOPEZ PORTILLO AND HER CO-WORKERS ARE FUZZY IN THEIR THINKING ON TWO COUNTS: ONE, THEY HAVE NOT ADEQUATELY DEFINED WHAT THIS SPECIFIC VISIT SHOULD ACCOMPLISH AND WHAT ITS PROGRAM SHOULD BE. SECOND, THEY HAVE NOT DETERMINED HOW IT RELATES TO THEIR OVERALL IDEA OF IMPROVING THE BORDER AREA.

11. I AGREE WITH SECRETARY ROEL THAT A NOVEMBER DATE WOULD GIVE US MORE TIME TO TRY TO BRING ORDER OUT OF THE PRESENT AMBIGUITY, ALTHOUGH IT IS LIKELY TO BE AN UPHILL RACE ALL THE WAY TO THE FINISH LINE. IF ROEL DOES INDEED HAVE FULL COORDINATING AUTHORITY AND EXERCISES IT FIRMLY, THE JOB WILL BE SOMEWHAT EASIER; BUT STILL NO BED OF ROSES, SINCE FOREIGN RELATIONS CAN BE AS DISJOINTED AS ANY OTHER MEXICAN AGENCY. BUT OUR PAST EXPERIENCE HAS BEEN THAT MRS. LOPEZ PORTILLO HAS SPECIAL ADVISERS SUCH AS ANDRES HOLZER, WHOSE PRESENCE ERASES, NOT JUST BLURS, THE FIXED LINES OF RESPONSIBILITY. WE CAN HOPE FOR IMPROVEMENT.

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PAGE 03 MEXICO 10399 02 OF 02 230219Z

12. ACTION REQUESTED. THAT DEPARTMENT CONFER WITH MRS. CARTER'S STAFF AND PROVIDE AS SOON AS POSSIBLE DATES FOR THE MEETING AND AN EXPRESSION OF PREFERENCE REGARDING LOCALE, WHICH I CAN TAKE BACK TO MRS. LOPEZ PORTILLO.

THOMPSON

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## Message Attributes

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